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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

EPHRAIM L. FROTHINGHAM

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INTRODUCTION.

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY is necessarily founded upon conceptions of the nature of God, of the origin and nature of the universe, and of the relation of God to the universe and to man. In our time, the greatest confusion exists, even within the precincts of the Christian Church, with regard to these fundamental ideas; and conceptions which contradict each other are recognized, either from an external eclecticism, or from an internal inversion by the Destructive Reason with the view to confound opposite ideas in the interest of a nihilistic or of a pantheistic philosophy. This perversion and inversion of Christian thought are produced by transcendental philosophy (German in origin) and by evolutionary science (English in origin), which work together to establish in the Church an Antichristian, materialistic, and pantheistic philosophy. There is, in our century, and extending to all departments of intelligence, a renaissance of Pagan thought quite analogous to that effected in the fifteenth century and onward; and our period, equally with that, calls for a new birth or regeneration of Christian thought from a more universal insight into the fundamental ideas of Christianity. From the very need of it, therefore, we may look for a new dogmatic form of Christian theology that shall incorporate the fundamental and primitive ideas of Christianity, as an historical institution, in forms of imaginative thought which shall correspond to that more internal condition of the Reason and of the Re-

ligious Sentiment which has been realized in the development of human consciousness; it being at the same time made clearly evident that these new symbols incorporate the primitive Christian idealism of the Bible and of the Church in their original signification, and not in a perverted or an inverted sense—symbols which shall represent that *constructive progress* in Christian dogmatics which must keep pace with the *destructive progress*, now so active and extensive, in order that Christianity may endure upon the earth. Conservative or true progress in theology consists in making clearer the old orthodox meaning of the ground-ideas of the Faith by the conception of new intellectual symbols, which shall unfold or make explicit the truths that were implicit in the primitive doctrine, but which, on account of the character of the primitive Christian consciousness, were more appropriately represented in ceremonial and intellectual symbols that appeal to an external, partial, and apprehensive form of intelligence, instead of being presented in rational doctrines which address that universal and comprehensive form of intelligence realized by the conscious union of the Reason, the Sentiment, and the Imagination or analogic intellect.

External, and partial, and apprehensive orthodoxy is fast yielding to the insidious attacks of a resuscitated and *progressive heterodoxy*, which in many cases is but the revival and restatement of the early heresies of the Church, but which has received new force from German Transcendentalism and English Evolutionism; and which, besides obtaining open and conscious adherents, is secretly undermining the faith of many, unconsciously to themselves. The Protestant Church is fast yielding the very citadel of Christianity—the doctrines of the Tripersonality of God, of the sole essential Divinity of Christ, of Creation, of the

essential humanity of man and his natural depravity, of Salvation through Faith by the Atonement of Christ — by yielding the sense in which these doctrines were originally held, and by accepting the new sense attributed to them by the School of *destructive progress* in Christian doctrine. This School conceives that form of innovation by which new and different meanings are given to old forms of doctrine — internal meanings opposite to the primitive ones, and in harmony with the heresies of the early Church; by which means, Christian words and forms of thought are used to incorporate the Pagan and Antichristian ideal, thereby producing a real inversion of Christian theology, most aptly called *Progressive Heterodoxy.*

The extensive falling away from orthodox Christianity, produced by the presentation of this inverted Christianity, has its origin in several causes, among which may be enumerated: (1) The individualism of the Protestant position. (2) The prevalence of a realistic and logical, instead of an idealistic and analogical, interpretation of the symbols of the Christian Faith. (3) The intellectual force and activity of the assailants of the Christian Faith, and the vividness of their insight into, the intensity of their experience of, and the intellectual mastery of their deceptive presentation of, the Antichristian idealism. (4) The susceptibility of the human mind, at the present time, to the flood of false idealism, which threatens to submerge the institutions that represent the truths of God and His Christ: for this renaissance of Christian heterodoxy and of Pagan nihilism and pantheism finds the religious consciousness of the Church weakened by an all-pervading individualism, intellectualism, logicism, and materialism, and by self-indulging affectionalism, but especially by a sympathetic morality. (5) The great development of the principle of Sympathy, combined with the inheritance of

a materialistic realism in the conception of the kingdom of Evil, has greatly helped to destroy the belief in spiritual and everlasting evil; and the emphasis of non-essentials by churchmen has given unbelievers and a sympathetic morality powerful means to injure the Christian faith. An important mission of the Christian believer of our time is to reinstate, on a philosophic basis and in a rational form, the belief in Evil as a spiritual power and as a factor in the everlasting destiny of man; for, belief in the reality of everlasting evil and death is the all-important precedent to the belief in Christ as the Saviour from death and evil, and as the only source of life and good; else, belief will drift into a sympathetic universalism and unitarianism, and depend on the saving power of character, or of time in the evolution of the inherent life and goodness of man as a son of God by nature, not by grace: in which case, all Christianity disappears from the belief, and each one becomes his own saviour by the awakening in him of the innate Holy Ghost, which shall lead him to his natural father, God. It is the old temptation of Eden: *Ye are gods.* (6) The teachers of the people, within the Church itself, are becoming the most efficient builders of this Babel of destructive progress, which by this means threatens to get possession of entire sects. The people are misled by their teachers, and know it not, for they lack the sensitive insight of a primitive faith — that insight, or immediate intuition, by the true Reason and Religious Sentiment, of the great principles and laws of Christianity, which enables the believer to stand by these principles and laws with a steadfastness that no temptation of the false Reason can move, and no assaults of the natural intellect and affection can disturb.

What is most needed, at this time, is a clear and luminous presentation of these Rocks of the Christian Faith,

on which all constructive progress must be founded, and against which the powers of darkness shall not prevail. Orthodox Christianity ought no longer to content itself with a petrified conservatism, instead of that constructive conservatism which builds anew with the conservative ideal: it must rebuild the temple of God with those everlasting rocks of truth rejected by these builders of the modern Babel; and all orthodox Christians should raise their voices against the false gospel that is being preached in the high places of Christendom. In order to particularize the theologic position of this Antichristian School, let us compare Orthodox Christianity and Progressive Heterodoxy on some of the chief doctrines.

I. On the Nature of God. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches that God is a sphere of determinate, all-sufficient, Absolute Nature, in which He realizes, manifests, and actualizes Himself as a Tripersonality of Holy Ghost, Father, and Son, who are the only consubstantial persons, and who are proceeding, begetting, and begotten within the Divine Nature, and not in the Universe; the Divine Nature being the synthesis of absolute subsistence, existence, and consistence, and the plenum of absolute ideality, reality, and actuality, entirely distinct from the ideality, reality, and actuality of the universe of Relative Existence; transcending, not immanent in, this universe, but omnipresent to it, as its Creator, Preserver, and Governor.

Progressive Heterodoxy teaches that God is absolute, persistent force and abstract intelligence, which is indeterminate and potential being; and that the Universe is the Divine Expression and Realization, is the determinate existence or actual being of God; that the Universe is God's Nature, in which he realizes himself, and of which he is equally the source, the environment, the soul, and the active principle. It teaches that Nature is the mani-

festation and phenomenon of God, being his continuous and progressive expression, revelation, visibility, and actuality; that material things and physical forces are manifestations of the Eternal Spirit, and that the forces of Nature are an effluence from God, the forces of matter are the proceeding divine energy — all the forces found actually in the Universe existing potentially in God, who is the universal potency to become all things, is the outflowing source of all and the inflowing end of all.

II. ON THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches that the Universe exists outside of God, and is the plenum of Phenomenal and Becoming Nature, is the synthesis of relative potentiality and ideality, as the manifestation and actuality of a created principle and essence; that the Universe of relative existence originates in the Creative Act of God, in which He makes out of the Nothing the entity of the Universe, creates the principles, forces, and laws of Becoming Existence. It teaches that the entity of the Universe is totally distinct from the entity of God; that the Universe is qualified by and represents the Nothing out of which it was created, as well as God its Creator; that Nature constitutes the universal sphere of created and phenomenal and relative potentiality and becoming, the actuality of which is the manifestation and phenomenon of created, secondary, and contrary causes and principles, essences and beings; that the persistent forces of Nature are but the manifestations of indeterminate and indefinite matter, created by God out of Nothing; and that all the manifestations of the Universe of created Nature are realized under the omniscient and omnipresent Providence of God, its Creator, Preserver, and Governor.

Progressive Heterodoxy denies that, in creation, God originates something out of nothing, and asserts that, in

creating, the Absolute Being calls into action or energy power eternally potential or passive in the infinite plenitude; it teaches the Evolution of the Universe in God, as his true and real manifestation, under the laws of continuity and consubstantiality; teaches that God and the Universe are One Absolute Being; that God is a part, Nature the other part; that the finite universe originates in and from the infinite God by a self-finiting, self-conditioning, and individuating, and by processes of overflow, efflux, procession, emanation, and evolution, by which means the dark, vast, infinite God individuates himself, emerges to light, becomes the divine logos [the universe] which expresses the thought of God, the truths of the absolute Reason: this is Generation, not Creation. It teaches that God effuses his infinite energy as and into the finite universe, which is the existence of God, or God existing, and constitutes with the Supreme Reason one all-comprehending rational system; being the synthesis of God and Nature, of substance and accident, of law and phenomenon, of the ideal and the actual, of divine potentiality and divine realization: it teaches that the Universe is in God, and God is in the Universe, each being integral to the other, and that the laws of the Universe are inseparable from absolute Being.

III. On the Person of Christ. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches that Christ is an eternal and divine person, is the Only-Begotten and absolute Son in God, the Eternal Personal Logos and Revealer of Divine Truth, who, in the fulness of time, assumed on to His Divine Person our fallen human nature, redeemed and regenerated it, united it to His divine nature in salvatory communion, and that thus the Eternal Son, as God and man, is Emanuel, "God with us," the visible God, is the one mediator between God and man — the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It

teaches that the nature of His Christ is the only being in the Universe in which God is immanent in any absolute sense, is the only created nature in which God incarnates, expresses, reveals, manifests, actualizes Himself in a real and spiritual manner. It teaches that the divine and human natures are distinct essences; that neither is there any original identity, nor is there any conversion or transition of one nature or essence into the other; neither are they united in the person of any man, but alone in Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of the Living God.

Progressive Heterodoxy teaches that the Universe is the Word of God, the laws of Nature are the eternal truths of God, and in Nature we have truth as it came from God; that the evolution of the visible and actual Universe is the progressive revelation of God, is the visible God with us; that in the finite Universe we see God as the Everlasting Becoming. It teaches that Christ is an historical and human person, is the ideal and universal man, begotten by the evolution of humanity, a human person in whom the eternally ideal had become the historically real, in whom the infinite was personally revealed. It teaches the impersonality of Christ's divinity, that the "Son" merely represents to us God's disposition to reveal and impart himself, and that the constitutive act for Christ's Person was the historical incarnation, the historical and progressive union of the divine and human natures, as soul and body: but it teaches that the divine and human natures are essentially one; that the divine is fulfilled in the human, and either nature can know and realize itself in the other; that the human nature is the divine nature humanly expressed, as word and thought; that ideal humanity is the realization of God, the counterpart and actualization of God's nature; that God is incarnate in Nature and in universal humanity; and that the

sum of the work of the special incarnation of God in Jesus Christ was to reveal to man his real value, to bring into more and more perfect revelation the certain truth, that man, and every man, is the child of God by nature, not by grace.

IV. On the Nature of Man. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches that man, by nature and substance, is a child of Adam, totally corrupt, and incapable of perceiving or loving God, requiring that he should be born from on high by the Spirit of Christ, in order that he might see, believe, and love God, and enter into the kingdom and patrimony of Christ, the Son of God; and that God is the father of man only as man is in Christ, the Incarnate Eternal Son, by His Atonement, by His substituted Life, and by the Imputation of His merit. It distinguishes the Creative Reason from the created reason, and teaches that Reason in man is but the image of, not identical with, the Reason of God.

Progressive Heterodoxy teaches, as the fundamental theologic dogma, that man is a child of God by nature and essence, *i.e.*, is consubstantial with God the Father; that the human soul is a capacity for God, and that in man God is revealed as Absolute Spirit. It teaches that the unity of the divine and human exists in all men, that God-manhood pertains to the entire human family, and that Reason in man must be essentially the same in kind with the Reason of God, and, therefore, that self-knowledge is the knowledge of God.

V. On the Salvation of the Soul. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches the Salvation of the Soul through Faith, by the Atonement of Christ, by whom its nature is sanctified, regenerated, and redeemed from the power of Evil: it teaches the spiritual free-will act of faith, through which, as a conscious spiritual choice, man either

realizes Salvation and everlasting spiritual life by communion with God in Christ the Mediator and Saviour, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; or realizes damnation and everlasting spiritual death and degeneration by the power of Evil, by union with the Devil in Satan, the adversary, the deviator, the falsehood, and the death.

Progressive Heterodoxy teaches salvation by character, not by Christ; teaches that Redemption for man consists in learning to live according to his nature, consists in awakening in him the efficiency of his own essential life, the indwelling Holy Ghost, by which he is brought back to harmony with himself, to the perfection of his being: *i.e.*, that the powerful cause of man's union with God is the innate divinity of his nature, and the essential condition of this union is the bringing himself into a state of receptivity from his spiritual environment, God; for grace is not a gift of God, it is as free as air, it is an atmosphere, and its experience depends on man's receptivity and power of assimilating God. It teaches that sin, damnation, hell, death, simply stand for want of correspondence with the spiritual environment, God; *i.e.*, consist in remaining natural and carnal, and receptive from the natural environment alone.

VI. On the Origin and Nature of Evil. — *Orthodox Christianity* teaches that Evil originates primarily and essentially in the Nothing out of which the universe was created, and secondarily in the defective will of the creatures so created. It teaches that the original sin of Adam was preceded by a will evil and depraved and capable of falling away from God, because he was made out of Nothing. It teaches that there is an everlasting spiritual kingdom of evil and an everlasting condition of reprobate existence, opposite to the kingdom of God and His Christ.

Progressive Heterodoxy teaches that Evil and Sin have

no primary origin, no spiritual reality, and no everlasting consequences, but are temporary accidents of natures essentially good and holy. Indeed — as it states the finite to be the manifestation and actuality and realization of the infinite, and the imperfect of the perfect — so its principle involves the statement that evil is the manifestation and actuality and realization of good, falsehood of truth.

None of the doctrines of this "new" theology are new: they have new garments and are but newly found in orthodox folds: they are the old wolves of heresy posing as progressive lambs of orthodoxy. This "new" theology would supplant the Church theology by Biology or Biological Religion, and the worship of God by the worship of Nature and Self-worship, or the worship of Humanity: it is without God, and it worships ideal humanity as the realization of God. Though these doctrines do not always appear together in the same presentation, yet the consanguinity of ideas is so strong that, if any prominent member of the heretical family appears on the theologic stage, the others are sure to be behind the scenes, waiting to appear in their proper turn.

The central idea of this theology is "the Divinity of Man," "Man is incarnate Deity;" and this idea, if less simply stated, is here as distinctly presented as it is by Emanuel Swedenborg, William E. Channing, Henry James, or any of the German transcendentalists. This inspiring idea is a false theology in itself. At the bottom of all theologic falsehood lies the falsity of falsities, that all men are by nature born children of God, instead of being reborn from on high, made children of *the adoption in Christ by grace*, through faith in Him: it contradicts the foundation of the Christian faith, and is an application of the ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρὶ of the Nicene Creed to all men, instead of to the

Only-Begotten Son of God; it is placing man within the Trinity, where he, as God, sitteth in the place of God, *shewing himself that he is God.*

This new system, best named *Pantheistic Evolution*, has no right to be called either "Theism" or "Christianity": in it there is no God, no Trinity, without the Universe and man — the potential Universe is its God: there is no Creation — the material and historical Universe is God expressing, realizing, actualizing himself: there is no Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of the Living God — all men may be christs, as they are sons of God by nature, born of his substance: there is no Salvation — only perfectibility and receptivity, the development of the divine capacity in man, a perfect education. Claiming to be Christocentric, this theology is Anthropocentric — it is Christ the Son of Man, alone, that it would make the centre. A theology cannot be truly Christocentric unless it be Theocentric in the sense of the Trinity of Persons in God, in order that true divinity and eternal personality may be ascribed to the Divine Son, founded on the absolute relation of the Son in the Divine Nature; that is, the Doctrine of the Trinity must be the foundation of a true Christology, for, without the Trinity of Persons in God, there cannot be divinity for Christ. Now, this new theology is but a transcendental form of Unitarianism: it says very little about the Trinity, but what it does say is clearly against any recognition of a real Trinity; God as one person including the possibility of two other persons to be realized in the Universe, is but the trinity of Pantheism or of Pancosmism. The real divinity and object of worship, in this theology, is Man as God incarnate, as God come to determinate and actual and individual existence and consciousness in the existence and consciousness of man. The leading Antichristian idea of our century is *the Divinity of Humanity;* and this appears

in the greatest variety of forms, and in all the sects and divisions of the Church: it is the reassertion of the Anti-christian falsehood, which denies that Rock of Truth on which the Church of Christ is founded; that Christ Jesus is the Only-Begotten Son of the Living God; and it asserts that all men are sons of the Living God, gods of God,— a self-assertion of Divinity which is the foundation of the Church of Satan, and which, if made in view of the spiritual presentation of Christ, is that sin against the Holy Ghost that shall not be forgiven unto men, neither in this world, neither in the world to come; for it denieth the truth of the Son of God which maketh us free from sin, and it bringeth the soul into everlasting bondage to sin and death.

Another universal ontologic falsity that lies at the basis of the thought of this school of progressive heterodoxy is the absolute immanence of God in the universe: it is a return to the Stoic philosophy, and is boldly announced as such by one member of this new school, who claims that Christian theology was founded on the Stoic philosophy (not on the Bible), and by the heretics Clement and Origen, of Alexandria — such is the blinding enthusiasm for this tempting falsehood.

The immanence of God, as presented by the "new" theology (but more frankly expressed by the phrase "the internal of every man is God"), means that divinity is inherent in man and nature — is innate as an abiding, internal element. This doctrine and its correlate, the essential identity or the consubstantiality of God and man and nature, nullify and negate every Christian doctrine. Especially they nullify the great Christian doctrine that Christ is Universal Mediative and Incarnative Existence, destroy the mission of Christ as the one Mediator, the one Incarnator of God, and make all men divine

mediators and incarnators. They deny the great truth that in Christ alone God is immanent in the Creation; in the Christ-nature which God the Son united to His Absolute Divine Person, as the medium in which he constitutes the total incarnation, revelation, and manifestation of Himself outside of His Absolute Nature and Divine Sphere of Existence.

The great need of the religious consciousness of our century has been and is the conception of the Person of Christ which shall present Him as both Absolute Creative existence and Phenomenal Created existence, and as both God and Man: a conception which shall represent the prehistoric Christ as the Universal Mediator, the Eternal Son, who is both God and Christ, both anointer and anointed, both creator and created, both redeemer and redeemed; who, in the fulness of time, came into our world, and assumed and redeemed humanity in his own person, that He might redeem and transform into His likeness all men who through faith should receive Him. Let us, then, look for the Christ; and, if His star be seen, it will not lead us to ideal humanity, but to God the Eternal Son who became incarnate as Christ Jesus.

The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see the Salvation of God.

HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION.

To the Hebrews, who realized Natural Christianity, was revealed the doctrine of the Creation, by a personal God, of a dualistic universe outside of His Nature, a universe in which good is set against evil, life against death, and light against darkness. In connection with the suggestive symbolism of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Christian Fathers conceived the Christian doctrine of Creation. This doctrine of the Fathers states that the first matter, out of which all things were formed, was created by God from Nothing, as the formless and changeable material which was to be worked upon or "brooded over" by the divine Creator — conceiving that the essential defect in Creation arose from this origin, from the Nothing, of the first matter out of which all natures of the phenomenal world are formed; and conceiving that the formal perfection in the natures framed by the Divine Word out of this formless and changeable matter originated from the Perfect Former and Maker, who was imaged in His Work.

Though the Christian Church has always verbally recognized the doctrine of Creation from Nothing, it has varied in the interpretation of this phrase to the extent of a radical difference in doctrine. If held in the sense of the early orthodox Christian philosophers, the formlessness and darkness of the earth or the first matter are to be attributed to the Nothing, as passive and negative cause and source: but, if held in the sense of the early heretical, the mediæval, and the Protestant churches — which recog-

nize only God, the active and positive cause — the imperfection, which all except the Scholastics and their followers connect with matter, is by implication attributed to God as its origin. The conception of Creation of the Athanasio-Augustinian Church was finally set aside by the sophistic arguments of Anselm's *Monologium*, which, by new definitions, displaced the early-church doctrine of Creation by the pantheistic doctrine of Emanation; and this conception, quite as much through neglect as from the absence of true ontologic insight, has endured in the Church-philosophy to the present time. In this, it accepts the doctrine of Origen and the Semi-Arian Eusebians, that *all is from God, we and all creatures*, instead of *out of Nothing*, as the Athanasians declared. All the early orthodox Christian philosophers distinguished between Creation and Formation; between the Creation, from Nothing, of the substance of the universe, and the Formation, from this created substance, of the genera and species and particular forms of the universe; and it is this doctrine of the creation of the substance of the universe by God out of the Nothing, as represented in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and as conceived by the fathers of the Christian Church, that we find the symbol of the Christian doctrine of Creation, by the Personal God from the Impersonal Nothing, of a universe representing these primal opposites; a doctrine which attributes to the Nothing and to Non-existence a privative operation and a negative reality, as the foundation and source of that defective being and of that negation of divine perfection which they considered to be the cause and essence of falsehood and evil and deformity, and of all imperfection in the creature.

Clement of Alexandria, the founder of the Alexandrian gnosis, began the systematic contradiction of the doctrine

of Creation, as well as of all the other doctrines of Christianity. In his view of the universe, he largely and closely followed the pantheism of Philo Judæus and the Neoplatonists of Alexandria; and though, on account of their evidently Antichristian character, he did not, as Philo did, clearly state his principles, and draw all the conclusions demanded by his premises, yet enough can be culled, here and there, to make it evident that, with him, God was the Father of the universe in the most real and substantial sense: Father of the eternal, invisible, and ideal universe, which he called the Beginning, the Son, as well as the Father of the visible and sensible universe, which is conceived by him to be the second Son of God. In his doctrine, Creation from Nothing is clearly opposed by Pantheism: the Son is made to be the intelligent element in the universe, the soul of the world, and the sensible world to be of the same essence with God; whereas in Christianity this sameness of essence belongs alone to the Trinity, and is denied to the creature.

Origen, the successor of Clement, develops the doctrine of Pantheism: he declares (*De Prin.*, II. I. 4), with regard to the origin of matter, which he conceives as non-being, that *God produced matter from his own power and wisdom* [not out of Nothing, as the orthodox taught] *in order that that might exist which formerly did not;* and (*De Prin.*, IV. I. 35) he calls original matter, or matter without quality, *the imperfection of God*, and places the finite within the divine nature, saying (*De Prin.*, II. IX. 1), *for we must say that the power of God is finite, and not, under pretence of praising Him, take away His limitation.*

The solution of the questions of the origin of the world and of evil, offered by Origen, who was not a true son of Christianity, were based upon the assumption of an implicit dualism in God; and upon the law of Emanation,

not that of Creation. His distinction between the Creator and the Creation is that between the substantial and the accidental condition of one and the same essence. Therefore, according to his conception, God was Substance-Accident, Infinite-Finite.[1] He conceived the world to originate in an emanative fall from the divine nature; and that the final end of the world is to return into the divine nature. This is Pagan cosmology, and contradicts the Christian doctrine of the world as a distinct nature created by the Will and Word of God for the purpose of permanently existing outside of the Divine Nature. Origen's conception was, that the different orders of our world arose from the falling-away or defection from God, in various degrees, of free-will natures which had been produced equally perfect and in communion with God: he would make the created universe to originate, not from the Divine Will and the creative activity of God, but from the defective will of the creature; in the free-will defection or fall from God of certain universal, spiritual natures originally existing in God; and in their arrangement by Him, after this fall, according to their merit. He even is so consistent with his dual-monistic principle as to allow that this freedom to turn away, or fall from God, is an image of the free-will of God Himself, thus recognizing, as inherent in God, a potential self-defectibility, or the power to fall or turn away from Himself. In taking this position, Origen is but consistent with the monistic principle; because, if defective causality be not recognized as the primal opposite to God, it must be either placed in God, or substituted for God, as primordial cause and source, as it is

[1] Most, if not all, of the modern forms of progressive theology, of Swedenborg, Schleiermacher, and of their American disciples, follow the philosophy of this Alexandrian school, being but an expansion of its heretical system.

in the Nothing of the Kabbala and of the Mystics from pseudo-Dionysios to Jakob Böhme. Origen recognizes that, at the end or consummation of the world, all bodies are dissolved into non-existence or primary matter without quality, and the blessed are said to live an incorporeal existence in God, or are merged in the Divine substance: a doctrine entirely pagan and Antichristian (*De Prin.*, II. III. 3).

Neoplatonic (heterodox) Christianity, under the form of Origenism, pervaded and perverted the entire Eastern Church, so that, at the external maturity of this perverted doctrine in its intellectual, critical, and realistic form, which was Arianism (both semi and simple), the Eastern Church was found to have become entirely Arian; and it was the Western Church that supported and carried on the orthodox faith, as expounded by Athanasios and Augustine, and for the first time presented the Christian doctrine of Creation in its fully developed orthodox form.

As to Athanasios was the divine commission to represent the doctrine of Tri-Personality in God, to Augustine was committed the mission to represent the doctrine of Creation by the Personal God out of the Nothing. This doctrine is represented in his *Confessions* (bks. XII, XIII), in his *De Civ. Dei* (bk. XII), and in his discourse *De Fide et Symbolo.*

He distinguishes three divine creative and formative acts: two of them before and without time; one of them of and within time:—

I. The ante-temporal creation of inchoate spirit and formless matter, as the intelligible and corporeal essences.

II. The creation, or re-creation from inchoate spirit, of light as the eternal created Wisdom, the heaven of heavens for the Lord.

III. The formation, or making in time from formless matter, of the corporeal heaven and earth, for the sons of men.

He states the first creation of the heavens and the earth (of *Genesis* I. 1, 2) to be the original, ante-temporal creation, out of Nothing, of Spirit and Matter, as opposite created essences: the essence of the spiritual creature, and the essence of the corporeal creature: he says, *Out of the Nothing didst Thou create Heaven and earth, a great thing and a small thing; . . . things of two sorts; one near to Thee, the other near to the Nothing; one to which Thou wouldst be superior; the other, to which the Nothing should be inferior.*

He conceives the eternal essence of the *spiritual* creature to be originally an inchoate deep, a spiritual chaos, which, by the *fiat lux*, was re-created and united to God: that is, he conceives the spiritual creation, from the original inchoate spiritual creature, of the created Wisdom, the eternal created Light, *as the primitive formed*, which is an eternal spiritual creature near to God, and the eternal habitation of the Lord; the Heaven before all days; the heaven of heaven of the Lord for Himself. He conceives the eternal formed spirit, near to God or to absolute form — and which is the created, perfective cause and essence from which originate, in the creation, Truth, Good, Beauty, and Light — to be an intellectual creature (the created Wisdom of *Proverbs*, VIII.) created by God as the spiritual form by which He made this beautiful world: God, who is the primary and creative perfective cause and essence, is thus conceived to create a secondary perfective cause and essence near to, below, and in relation with Himself. This created Wisdom he conceived to be a formed likeness to God: not God Himself, or absolute creative form; but a created principle and cause of per-

manence and beauty; a formed, created entity, constituting the principle and essence of created order.

On the other hand, he conceives the eternal essence of the *corporeal* creature to be the material chaos, the invisible, disordered, dark, abyssal earth or matter (of *Genesis*, I. 2) out of which God made, in time, the visible or corporeal heaven and earth. This eternal earth or formless matter he identifies with the eternal created Darkness above the abyss, as *the primitive formless*, which is an eternal corporeal creature near to the Nothing, the earth before all days, the earth for the sons of men. He conceives the eternal formless matter, near to the Nothing or to absolute formlessness — and which is the created defective cause and essence from which originated, in the creation, falsehood, evil, deformity, and darkness — to be created by God as the matter or material out of which He made and formed *the beautiful world*, as a true and good nature. God the primary perfect cause is thus conceived to create a secondary defective cause and essence: but this conception refers the origin of falsehood, evil, and deformity, darkness and chaos, primarily to the Nothing out of which this secondary defective cause and essence was created, and near to, above, and in relation with which, it was placed; the Nothing thus being recognized as the uncreated and primary defective cause and essence. That he conceives the Nothing to stand for the defective cause and essence is seen by his attributing to the first Matter, created from the Nothing, qualities which arise in its origin out of the Nothing: he calls this matter *an almost nothing; . . . a nothing-something, an is and is not;* what it has of the something, of Existence, and of form and beauty, it derives from God its Creator, who is absolute fulness, who is absolute Existence, and absolute form and beauty: and what it has of the Nothing, of non-existence,

and of formlessness and deformity, it derives from the dissolutive Nothing, its source — the primordial Vacuum and Void — which is decreative non-existence, and deformative and dissolutive Formlessness. If to the Nothing were not attributed a negative reality and deficientive qualities — if it were not conceived as substance in a negative and deficientive or privative sense — then, qualities derived from its origin out of the Nothing would not be attributed to the First Matter which was created out of it by God, and which was, in its very nature, *next to the nothing, . . . as formless matter*, as vacuity and voidness, *a formless almost nothing;* and which was the material upon which the formative power of God operated in reducing it to created and phenomenal form — to created and phenomenal law, power, and order — in the formation of the visible and corporeal heaven and earth: *For thou, Lord, madest the world of formless matter, which Thou madest from nothing almost nothing, from which Thou mightest make the great things which we sons of men wonder at. Indeed, this same earth which Thou hadst made, was formless matter because it was invisible, and disordered (incomposita), and darkness above the abyss. From which earth invisible and disordered, from which formlessness (informitas), from which almost nothing Thou mightest make all these things by which this changeable world endures (constat) and endures not, in which mutability itself appears, and in which times can be perceived and numbered* (*Confessions*, XII. VIII).

That Augustine attributed to the Nothing or nonentity the character of opposition to God, is seen in his *City of God* (bk. XII. 2): *To that nature which supremely is, and which created all else that exists, no nature is contrary save that which does not exist. For non-entity is the contrary of that which is. And thus there is no being* [non-being] *contrary to God, the Supreme Being and author of all beings whatsoever.*

This created formlessness Augustine conceived to be made out of nothing, a formless unlikeness to God *which should be formed by* the Divine Likeness: *not a mere nothing* or primary uncreated formlessness; but *that which could be formed;* a formless created entity constituting universal potentiality, the capacity for a succession of forms, for change from form to form in the creation; a created principle and cause of changeableness, opposite to the absolute permanence of God and to the relative permanence of the spiritual creature.

This inspired symbolism of the Augustinian Church — which represents the doctrine of Creation by the constructive God from the destructive Nothing, and implies the recognition of the Nothing as deformative and corruptive cause and essence — though it is inherent in the pure doctrine of the Christian Church, as the foundation of its sentimental belief in opposite beings and conditions of spiritual existence, has never been rationally formulated: on the contrary, the intellectual statements of the Church, and even of Augustine himself when under the control of the logical faculty, have always been founded on a monistic philosophy. Consequently, when the logical intellect, become strong in the service of Naturalism and of Antichristian idealism, destroys these sentimental analogies of the Christian faith, which has itself become weak and perverted in the service of a Natural Morality, all vestige of the idea of and belief in opposites vanishes from the consciousness of the Church; and, on the one hand, opposites are confounded, Emanation from God or Evolution in God displace Creation by God: while, on the other hand, the Abyssal Nothing is substituted for the Personal God, as the universal cause and final end of being.

The Alexandrian Antichristian ideal of original cause and the origin of the universe — which appeared in a Uni-

tarian and intellectual form in the Pantheistic gnosticism of Clement of Alexandria and of Origen, and in Eusebianism and Arianism, thence following — was conceived in a transcendental and sentimental form in the pannihilistic mysticism of pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite, and of his master, pseudo-Hierotheos (the latter of whom is thought to have been the pantheist Bar Sudaili). The Dionysian writings at once pervaded the idealism of the Eastern Church; and, later, they furnished fundamental ontological principles, first, to the Scholastic philosophy (as founded by John Erigena and summed by Thomas Aquinas), and afterwards to German mysticism of the fourteenth (Eckhart, Tauler, *etc.*) and seventeenth (J. Böhme) centuries.

As Scholasticism passed through its historical epochs — the Theological, led by Anselm, and the Psychological, led by Thomas Aquinas — these fundamental ideas became concealed or modified; yet, the pantheistic doctrine of Emanation is as clearly stated by Anselm, the St. Victors, and Aquinas, as by Dionysios and Erigena; while the ontological vision of the mystic Darkness and Nothing is not distinctly realized.

The Augustinian doctrine of Creation out of Nothing is opposed by Anselm (*Monologium*): he denies creation from nothing in the sense of the early-church theology, and attempts, by a sophistic play upon words, to get rid of the philosophic idea of the Nothing, as defective cause, and to substitute the common meaning, "no thing": thus, creation, or making out of Nothing, is explained by him to mean, that things which before had no being, or were no things, began to exist, or to be things. He states that all things are made by and from God, the supreme essence, and always existed ideally in the supreme intelligence, though before their production in actuality, they had no existence, or were not: but, as their ideal existence is their most

real and causative condition of being, it cannot be said they were "no things," but were ideal things instead of actual things: for it cannot be asserted that the distinction between the ideal and the actual is that between nothing and something. Besides, this view makes the Universe to be the Actuality of God, the Divine Manifestation, the Existence of the Divine Essence, or God Existing: which would be spiritual pantheism, were there not a concealed identification of God with the Nothing, that makes the doctrine, at bottom, pannihilistic.

Thomas Aquinas presents this pantheistic doctrine without sophistry, and with great directness and clear simplicity of thought and language (*Summa theol.*, P. I, *quaes.* 2, 44, 45); while the nihilistic element, though concealed by baffling words, may be clearly seen as inherited thought. Thus, the Catholic Church in its Scholastic philosophy (and on this point it is followed by the entire Protestant Church) leaves the representative conception of the early church (of the Nothing as Non-being and defective cause), and, though it still uses the phrase "Creation from nothing," understands the word "Nothing" in the common, not the philosophic, sense. Therefore, it does not attribute to the nothing any causative or qualificative operation; it identifies creation by God with emanation from God; and, assuming the ground of Pantheism, it conceives God and the created universe to be related as cause and effect — conceives the universe to be the manifestation and actuality of God; or that God as efficient, material, formal, and final cause, produces the universe as a Divine Effect.

In the Scholastic philosophy, as well as in the common theistic belief of the present time, the true premise, that God is the positive, original, and only ground and cause of existence, is accompanied by the false conclusion that

the universe is existence in the same sense that God is, that it is an emanate revelation of Himself, and is therefore absolute in essence: instead of being a Creation out of Nothing (conceived as Non-being and Not-god), and therefore qualified as Relative Being by the Nothing, and being an image of the Not-god as well as of God: *i.e.*, containing elements which are relatively non-being as well as those which are relatively being. It makes no difference whether we call the universe (the world and the creature) limited, defective, relative, dependent, imperfect, or whatsoever of such names: it is equally impossible to derive such a kind of being directly and continuously from or in the unlimited, perfect, absolute, independent, self-subsisting, all-sufficient God: if the law of continuity operate in the production of the Universe, this Universe must be an Infinite Divine Effect, on the same plane and of the same kind of being as the Infinite Divine Cause. Some think to evade this philosophic law by conceiving God to include potential limitation, defect, *etc.*, as conditions of the divine manifestation, and as necessary qualities of the ideal universe which eternally stands in the Divine Reason as the energizing cause by which God expresses, reveals, manifests, realizes, or actualizes Himself in the finite and visible universe. But, a being ideally and potentially finite and defective is not God: it is only the personification of the ideal and invisible universe that is posited as God. It is but a pseudo-infinite that can finite itself, a pseudo-perfection whose manifestation and expression are imperfect beings: *i.e.*, this so-called infinite and perfect being would include the potential and ideal finite and imperfect as its possible manifestation; and the finite and imperfect would be the actual and real infinite and perfect: thus, each would contain the power to negate itself, the logical result of which conception is a form of the Hegelian Pannihilism.

The premise that God is Infinite, Absolute, and Independent Existence, and the Universe is Finite, Relative, and Dependent Existence, carries with it the conclusions, (1) that the Universe is not produced by Monistic Cause or under the law of Continuity, and is not related to God as effect to cause; because the effect of a sole, infinite, absolute, and independent cause would be infinite, absolute, and independent, on the ground that the effect is the manifestation in form or actuality of the ideal principle or cause, and that cause and effect must therefore belong to the same category of being: cause, being, and effect — as principle, essence, and form — being the inseparable elements of entity. The relation of Creator and Creation is that of absolute and self-subsisting entity to relative and dependent entity; that of absolute and primary cause, being, and effect to relative and secondary cause, being, and effect. (2) If God be Absolute Existence, and the Universe be Relative Existence (in other words, if we would have a real Theism, and would avoid Materialism, Etherialism, Pantheism, and Pannihilism), it is necessary that a privative and dissolutive sphere should from eternity stand over against God. The early-church philosophy and theology expressed this opposite to or negation of God by the idea of the Nothing, which the Augustinian Church recognized as the passive ground of mutability, privation, and defect in the creation, as well as of the possibility of evil and sin in the rational creature. Without the presence of a privative and dissolutive cause, God could not, by the very necessity of His Infinite and Absolute Nature, produce any being less than Himself; any being outside of His Infinite Being and Perfect Fulness; any which should want a single one of His attributes; or could be deprived or could deprive itself, or lose or diminish any of the Divine quiddity, quality, or

quantity; or which should be capable of change, degeneration, evil, or death; whether these be real, or only apparent to the consciousness of man — for there can be no representative without a principal or type. The (orthodox) Christian Church has always recognized that which is generated from God to be God the Creator, Eternal Offspring of the Substance of God, God with God: and that which is produced from the Nothing to be the creature, made in time, but not eternally generated; a work, but not begotten of the Substance of God; not consubstantial with the Divine Nature, but a new substance produced in time by the Divine Creator out of the Nothing, and having qualities originating in this method of its production. Thus, we see that the Semi-Arian Eusebians of the fourth century opposed the doctrine of the production of all things out of nothing, and held them to be out of God, and therefore consubstantial with God: which is pantheism. At the first Council of Nicæa (Hefele, I, p. 286) these pantheistic Eusebians said: *We are willing to accept the formula* [the Logos is from God, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, instead of "out of nothing," ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, as the Arians wanted it]; *for all is from God, we and all creatures, as says the Apostle* (*I Cor.*, VIII. 6; *II Cor.*, V. 17). Augustine (*Confessions*, XII. VII.) says: *Thou, Lord, . . . didst . . . create something, and that out of nothing. For Thou createdst heaven and earth; not out of Thyself; for so they should have been equal to Thine Only-Begotten Son, and therefore to Thee also; whereas no way were it right that aught which was not of Thee should be equal to Thee.*

If we study the history in Christendom of the doctrine of the Universe, we shall find a steady digression from the ideas of Creation and Omnipresence to those of Manifestation (Emanation or Development) and Immanence: from the doctrines of creation by God out of nothing and

His Providential Omnipresence to his Creation — as we find them represented in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament, and in the Christian Scriptures and early Church — to the doctrine that the World is the manifestation and actuality of God, either as an Emanation from God, or as an Evolution in God; and that God is the immanent principle and essence of the World: a doctrine which we find in the heathen cosmogonies, in the early heresies of the Christian Church, and in the Transcendental Church of all ages: until, to-day, the doctrine of Creation in the Church has become substantially identical with that of Pantheistic heathenism and of early and late Antichristianity; and there does not exist in the thought of the Church the ability to contemplate the Creation as distinct from God, or God as transcending the Creation. The progressive portion of the Church teaches the doctrine of the inherence of Nature in God and of God in Nature; the efflux of Nature from God, and the influx of God into Nature; that God is the *esse*, and the Universe the *existere*, of Being: while the Orthodox portion of the Church still goes through the form of teaching that the Universe was created, neither out of preëxistent Matter nor out of the substance of God, but *ex nihilo;* yet, if "Creation out of nothing" be construed — as it was by the Scholastics, and is now by both Catholic and Protestant Churches — to mean merely that by the Will and Act of God the Universe of things, which were not actually, commenced actually to be, the Creative Activity, which is an element of the Eternal Divine Essence, is posited as the substantial cause of the Universe, while the Creative Ideality of God, in which these things always existed ideally, is posited as the intelligent cause of the Universe: thus, the original proposition, *that the Universe was not created out of the substance of God,* is contradicted, and the

ontological question is evaded, though the essential identity of God and Nature is implied.

The Antichristian transcendentalist, with logical consistency, states *the essential or substantial identity* of God, Nature, and Man; and presents *himself* as the incarnate god of the monistic philosophy; as the perfect flower of the divine seed; as the individual and definite personal consciousness of the unconscious, indefinite, impersonal diversity-chaos which his philosophy posits as first principle and cause: while the transcendental churchman of our day, unconscious of his Antichristian position, will assert, as the great truth of the world, the *essential connection* between the life of God and the life of man, and the Divine sonship of every man by nature, instead of by grace through faith in Christ Jesus; selecting from the Bible (as did the Arian) texts to favor his pantheistic belief; not seeing that the rational basis of his belief is identical with that of the more clear-sighted transcendentalist; and being willing, as he is, to assert the Divine Immanence, that God is wholly in every form of the universe — ideally, essentially, and actually: conceiving God to be the ideal Universe and potential Matter, and the forms of the Universe to be the mediums in which He realizes the Divine Actuality, to be the expression, form, and manifestation of God.

This is entirely in harmony with the statement of the Pantheist and the Pannihilist, who posit, as divinity, an indefinite and indeterminate pseudo-spirit which is really potential matter: thus contradicting the Christian idea of both divinity and spirit, which is that of personal and conscious active life, self-sufficient, and having its own inseparable form and actuality, as well as its own principle and ideality.

The aim of the Christian philosopher should be to rec-

ognize absolute distinction, determination, definition, and relation in God, without placing in His nature the finite, diversity, separation, negation, either implicit or explicit, either potential or actual. The Christian must guard against the axiom used by mystical nihilism and pantheism: *omnis determinatio negatio est.* Assuming this false formula, these systems posit, as first principle, an indeterminate, indefinite, unconscious, annihilative Non-being, which is the very negation of true being and absolute existence, is the opposite to the Personal God of Christianity: for Absolute Being, in its proper nature, is definite and confinite, as well as infinite; exists and consists, as well as subsists; is Absolute Will and Creative Entity, as well as Absolute Reason; is perfect entity — is absolute form, manifestation and actuality, as well as absolute principle, causality and ideality, and absolute essence, being and reality. Philosophy is equally nihilistic, whether it conceives the first principle and origin of all (called God) to be indefinite and indeterminate potentiality, possibility, capacity, or conceives it to be unconscious instinct, want, desire: both conceptions come under the same category of ideas, and belong to the nihilistic or destructive pole of thought, which posits, as God, the Not-god, His primordial opposite.

We cannot truly think of God without distinction, definition, individuality, relation; and God would not be Perfect Entity, were He not essentially the distinctive perfections which are His Attributes — such as Wisdom, Love, and Might; Faithfulness, Holiness, and Righteousness; Justice, Mercy, and Judgment; Truth, Goodness, and Beauty; Light, Blessedness, and Glory: all which are entitive elements of His nature, and presuppose distinction, definition, and relation under the law of Marriage, not the law of Separation; presuppose individual-

ity, not dividuality; for individuality arises not from diversity or separative force, but from unity or unitive power. Diversity, separation, and difference imply antagonism and discord, the separation of the diverse, and in their operation they are destructive, not constructive or productive of individuality and harmonious distinction; they are ideas entirely opposite to those of distinction, definition, individuality, and relation, which are distinction in unity and in the same, and are related to Marriage, Harmony, Order, and Production: the perfect harmony and orderly union of absolute distinctions in God, who is the Conscious and Active Life, the Factive Law and Order, the Constructive Unity, Universality, and Marriage. This distinction and determination in God cannot be the type or cause of the diversity, difference, separation, discord, and destruction which we see in the created universe, and which must have a cause, source, and type other than God, that is, the Separation, Death, and Chaos of the Decreative and Dissolutive Nothing out of which God produced it by His Creative Operation.

DUALISM THE IMPLICIT BASIS OF THOUGHT IN ONTOLOGY, IN THEOLOGY, AND IN PSYCHOLOGY.

ONTOLOGIC DUALISM. — If we acknowledge the existence of God as absolute and perfect being, and the existence of the world as relative and imperfect being, the recognition of primary dualism is demanded, because the manifestation and operation of God alone must be an absolute and perfect universe: if we conceive God alone, we cannot account for the universe as it is: there could be nothing but God the One and All: the Infinite One could not get beyond Himself, but must manifest within Himself, God of God in God.

The Bible and the Early Christain Church assume an original duality: it is integral to them, but is not explicitly presented. God's opposite is continually suggested: very clearly in *Genesis*, in the original creation, as the primordial type of the earth without form and void and the darkness upon the face of the deep. The Bible further teaches that God made darkness and evil as well as light and good: but it is evident that the ideal, essence, and type of darkness and evil must have subsisted in the increate Not-god, upon which God operated in the creative act, not in God Himself, whose nature is absolute light and love. This opposite to God the early Church represented as the Nothing out of which God created the First Matter: the actual positing of the Nothing in place,

as defective cause and origin of evil, is accomplished by St. Augustine (*Confessions*, bks. XII, XIII).

Scholasticism set aside the doctrine of Creation by God, and substituted that of Emanation from God; and this doctrine, combined with that of Evolution in God, has hitherto endured in both Catholic and Protestant Churches, unconscious of the Pantheism of their ontology. Yet (so infatuated are they with the explicit recognition of Monism), being obliged by the laws of thought to recognize an implicit duality, they will even place this duality in God Himself: as if thus there were any the less a recognition of duality, only it is an impossible and monstrous one.

All intellectual cosmogonies, notwithstanding an avowed monism, must be internally inconsistent with the premise of monistic causality and being, and we always find in them a necessary or an implied recognition of opposites, though they may be verbally denied.

I. Those systems which posit God as sole cause and being, see in God — the Infinite, Absolute Unity and Fulness, the Conscious Life and Order — the cause of and latent capacity for the finite, for diversity, privation and nullity, for unconsciousness, death and dissolution. Therefore, their conception of God contains in it the attributes opposite to the very nature of God: for, if these attributes appear in the universe produced by God as sole cause and being, it can only be because this pseudo-god is conceived to implicitly contain his opposite. It is Pantheism, or the positing of God as the potential source of all things.

II. On the other hand, those systems which posit the Nothing, as origin and source, conceive this pseudo-Nothing — this dissolutive unconsciousness, death and lawless chaos — to involve the Absolute God, the Divine Conscious Life and Lawful Order, as well as the mixed world of contraries; and that these are evolved from it as its

temporary manifestation: they must therefore be conceived as potentially in it, as also they are conceived to be destined to finally return into it.

III. Those systems which posit the universe as eternal self-productive material Being, are obliged to recognize opposite elements and processes in this universe, whether they posit the eternity of the concrete world of species (Aristotle), or the eternity of vacuum and atoms, or of atoms alone (Leukippos, Demokritos, Epikouros, Lucretius, modern atomism), or of any or all of the material elements (Ionian physicists, Herakleitos, Empedokles).

Philosophic thought does not and cannot escape the recognition of opposites: especially, any system of ontologic thought cannot move a step without this recognition. Even in its attempt to evade it by positing a pseudo-unity, prior to, above and proceeding to, division and antagonism, it but accomplishes the posit of an implicit duality under the mask of unity: the idea of the opposites is always there; it only throws back the explicit antagonism of the universe into an implicit antagonism of an original pseudo-unity or indifference: the duality is only placed back a stage where it is internal, chaotic, indefinite, and unconscious, instead of being external, orderly, definite, and conscious, as it is in the Creation.

These conceptions attempt to get behind the definite sphere of antagonisms or contradictions, and even of distinction, without recognizing primordial opposition — thinking that, by getting into the indefinite and indistinct (whether it be of the Nothing, of Nature, or of the human Ego), they are entering a sphere where Unity reigns, because the antagonism is there not evident and explicit. But, if it be implicit in this origin, they are simply reaching an indistinct and indefinite antagonism; it is but the old Diversity-Chaos that is posited, from which Distinc-

tion and Order cannot rationally be deduced. A spiritual unity consistent with antagonism or with diversity, even potential and implicit, is unthinkable by rational thought; because, when this antagonism or this diversity appears, the pseudo-unity disappears, and its fictitious character is seen in the evidence of its implicit discord.

There is no before or above the original opposition of Unity and Order to Diversity and Chaos, as absolute against dissolutive principles: and the attempt to reach this impossible point must result in really positing one or the other of these opposites, with no rational possibility of getting beyond or out of it, but with the irrational necessity of evolving from it its opposite, in order to appear to explain the phenomena of existence, which represent both of them, and with the inevitable result of confounding these opposites and rendering them both completely fictitious.

We cannot escape them, these opposites, which can never remain together in a spiritual organism, and whose representation together in any organism proves it to be unspiritual and unreal; these opposites, which cannot be derived or produced or evolved, the one from the other. If one thinks to get behind, or before, or above them, he still finds them in his thought: if he thinks to conceive the cause and origin above Being and Non-being, above good and evil, above affirmation and negation, above all name — to represent this original Source he still uses the name either of one of these opposites or of some attribute of one of them; and he is even led to call the infinite divinity, sometimes the negation, and sometimes the ablation, of all that can be named and known, sometimes the negation of negation — all which is Nihilism, or the positing of the Nothing as the Potential Source of all things.

THEOLOGIC DUALISM. — Christian theology is based on dualism, on the reality and spirituality of God and the Devil, of good and evil: and when it becomes monistic — or believes only in the reality of God and of good, and that the Devil is a myth, and Evil but a temporary accident, having no spiritual and lasting value or power — then theology loses God; for it is obliged to conceive Him as including the Devil; thus, the very idea of Christianity disappears, as no Saviour from spiritual death and evil is needed; self-purification and self-salvation take the place of the total depravity of human nature and salvation by Christ: every man is a Christ, that is, a Son of God by nature, not by grace; it being but necessary to awaken in him the innate Holy Ghost which will lead him back to his Father from whence he came. This view claims divinity for man, as clearly as does any openly Antichristian system: it makes no difference whether it be held by "rationalist" or churchman.

One great need of Christian Theology to-day, is the ontologic demonstration of the reality of evil, as a spiritual power and factor in the everlasting destiny of man: a demonstration that shall appeal to reason as well as to faith. The attribution of evil to a secondary cause which has been created by God mutably good (that is, potentially evil) does not present a rational solution of its origin: it would still be primarily attributed to God as its cause. Again, the statement that angel and man were created with a will free to determine itself towards either good and life or evil and death, leaves unsolved the origin of the Evil and Death which are presented for its choice, and which it is free to choose.

St. Augustine has recognized the primary origin of Evil, though but partially. In treating of the sin of the first man (*De Civ. Dei*, XIV. 13), he recognizes the fact,

that *the evil act had never been done had not an evil will preceded it; . . . that the wicked deed was committed by persons who were already wicked; that* [human] *nature could not have been depraved by vice had it not been made out of nothing, . . . that it falls away from Him* (God) *because it is made out of nothing;* and that, by so falling away, it approximates to a nonentity. But Augustine, by this recognition of the Nothing or Nonentity as defective essence and cause, only partially explained the origin of evil, because he recognized only one element of the Not-god, that of nonentity: whereas the philosophic reason demands totality on the plane of absolute Being, that is, totality in the opposite to God, as well as in God.

This conception of the early Church, while it represented, in the Nothing, the defective cause of falsehood, evil, and deformity in the creation, was never expanded into theologic thought; and when the Catholic Fathers undertook to state explicitly the origin of these destructive principles, they did not go farther back toward their source than the free-will of the creature; though the capacity, in the creature, for falsehood, evil, and deformity was referred to the origin of his substance from the Nothing or Nonentity: *e.g.*, Augustine recognized nonentity *to be that which is wholly opposite to Him who supremely and always is* (*De Civ. Dei*, II. 2); and, though he denies an *essential cause of the evil will*, affirms a non-essential cause — the Nothing or Non-being; and says (*De Civ. Dei*, XII. 9) that the creature corrupted his own will, *because it was a nature made of nothing;* that evil *consists in turning from God and what is above it towards the nothing and to what is below it;* and that *the will is made evil by nothing else than defection from God — a defection of which the cause, too, is certainly deficient:* that is, the Nothing: for what was deficiency in the nothing becomes defectibility and Evil in the creature.

This, however, is a substitution of the Act of Sin for that Essence of Evil which makes this act possible; but which essence Augustine denied, except so far as he recognized a defective essence in the Nothing; which, though he would not attribute Evil to it, he recognized as the cause of Evil: but, if it be the cause, it must be the original and precosmic principle, of evil; and therefore primordial evil.

The various distinctions of man from God, which are indiscriminately alleged as grounds of the possibility of sin and evil — namely, that he is finite (in the sense of a limited being), that he is imperfect, or dependent, or self-corruptive, or mutable — all fail to conceive how it is possible for such a being to originate, either ideally, essentially, or formally, from an infinite, perfect, self-sufficient, immutable, glorious cause alone. A limitive, separative, mutative, corruptive essence must precede limited, dependent, mutable, and corrupted existence: Wickedness, or the Evil Will, must precede Sin or the Evil Act; and the great mystery is, how could this Evil Will come to be? If it corrupted itself actually, or in act of sin, it must first have been corrupt ideally and really in the capacity and possibility of sin: and this could not be, unless it did, as an entity, include the principle, essence, and form of evil; whether naturally and accidentally or spiritually and substantially, would not change the problem.

The recognition of this truth must throw back the origin of Evil to primordial cause: it matters not whether the creature in whom it first appears be angel or man; the problem is the same: how could any creature be dualistic; be a free-will nature including the possibility of sin, of revolt against or turning away from God the Creator? And to what could he turn? Why should turning away

from God result in evil or sin, unless persisting evil were present, opposite to God? The ground taken by Augustine is the only Christian ground: because the stuff of which he was made was created out of the Nothing, to which he turned in turning away from God: this origin caused the defectibility of his nature, for this nature was not out of God the Creator. And the meaning of this is, not that there was a time when he was not, and a time when he began to be, but that he was made out of a defectible material and therefore had a defectible nature, will, and consciousness. It matters not that this defectible material was created in time: the ante-temporal cause of its defectibility was found in the Nothing, out of which it was created, and next to and in relation with which it was placed by its Creator; which conception gave original position to the Nothing (Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. XII.).

This is not recognizing Evil as Substance, as Being: but as opposite to this, as decreative and disentitive: not as a creator and factor, but as a decreator and defector: yet, as annihilative force in the position of negation.

PSYCHOLOGIC DUALISM. — The psychologic proof of dualism, of the reality of God's opposite, is complete: the conception of, the belief in, and the worship of, annihilative cause is much more extensive and persistent than the conception, belief, and worship of God, the constructive cause and being; and the systems of Nihilistic idealism, which posit as first cause and real being the Nothing, or some element of the Nothing, have in the history of human thought quite as connected a development as have the systems which posit God as sole first cause; and the history of the human race shows as clear a vision of, and as fervent a devotion to, the nihilistic ideas and principles of destruction, as it does to the ideal of God and His

creative and saving causality and activity. Historians of philosophy and religion fail to develop this fact, and accept as real and true the perverted and false use of words in many of these systems; sometimes, perhaps, from sympathy with the method of inversion, or from lack of perception of the Antichristian ideas presented in the words of Christian thought; but generally from the obscuring guidance of their monistic standpoint: for it is only by the conception of opposite systems of idealism — of opposite genera, generations, and families of ideas — that any orderly light can be thrown on the history of human worship and speculation, thought and life.

In order that we may trace the origin and nature of many of the philosophic ideas of our time, and their consanguinity with the philosophy of Nihilism, we will give an outline-sketch of the history of the Pannihilistic Ideal, which will indicate the historic succession and intellectual heredity of this philosophy; and show that nihilistic ideas are either the basis of, or important elements in, the "new" philosophic and theologic thought which is current in our midst.

HISTORY OF PANNIHILISM.

PANNIHILISM is founded on the doctrine of nihilistic monism. It posits the Nothing, the abyssal, dark, and chaotic Void, as the only eternal reality, as the indefinite, indeterminate, unconscious, lifeless, non-existent, potential universe, subsisting above God, as the origin of God and of the world — their first source and cause, as well as their final end. This Abyssal Chaotic Nothing is variously termed the Deep; Primordial Darkness; the Primordial Causative Nothing; the Origin of Divinity; the Indeterminate One; the Unknown and the Unknowing One; the Supreme Neither or Negation; the Absence of all being, the Nameless; the Eternal Mother of all, the matrix from which God and the world come forth, and to which they return; Absolute Identity, Indifference, or Negativeness; Pure Being = Pure Naught.

Pannihilism conceives that the dualistic universe of Becoming Existence is the self-evolution and the self-dissolution of the Divinity; that this universe culminates in man, who is the definite, determinate, conscious, living, existent, actual Deity, the concrete end of the definite and conscious universe, which must return into the indefinite and unconscious universe, the abyss of annihilation, its final end.

The philosophy of Nihilism is as old as the creation and as widespread as humanity; and it has the providential mission to present the dis-entity of God's opposite, the Dissolutive Nothing, the primordial principle of destruction, death, and chaos. Its systems are false, not in the nega-

tive or privative, but in the positive, sense; they represent a real and spiritual falsehood, evil, and deformity — an Infernal Word: they posit, as primordial cause and being, the Infernal Impersonal Dis-entity, which is the Eternal Opposite to the Tripersonal God. The prophets of this philosophy and religion are real seers, they are inspired by a real word, they present a revelation of real things; but it is the reality of the direful kingdom of the Devil. What the seer of mystic nihilism sees with his Destructive Reason is the Dissolutive Nothing — Separation, Death, and Chaos: with his destructive Imagination (governed by his false Reason, which attributes to the Nothing inherent divinity and cosmic capacity), he frames a system of false ontology. The intellectual nihilist takes his departure from the mystic nihilist, imagines the Abyssal Nothing to be a confusion of opposites, a chaos of antagonistic principles and essences in a state of identity or indifference or indefiniteness, and that this chaos necessarily and unconsciously passes to the evolution, definition and differentiation of this confused antagonism in the universe of Becoming existence, and thence gradually returns into its original indistinct, indefinite, and involved condition: this is the form of thought it has always taken — from the Hamitic and Hindu and Buddhist nihilism, to that of Hegel and Schopenhauer and Herbert Spencer.

The earliest forms of Pannihilism are found in the cosmogonies of the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Hindus, and the Chinese.

I. The religion most widely diffused among the Chinese and the entire Mongolian race regards *pure Nothing* as the supreme, the absolute, God; regards the Void and Nothing as the principle, source, and final end of all things.

II. Nihilism constitutes the Hindu philosophy: destroying or dissolving nihility is its very principle. It con-

ceives that Not-being (*Asat*) is the ground of Being (*Sat*); that, higher than the senses, higher than spirit, is Naught, which is the last limit and highest goal; and this Naught is conceived as a Destroying Essence and Dissolutive Principle. In the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* the infinite (boundless) and eternal deity is all-dissolving Death — atoms, souls, and worlds sweep onward in transient existence, and finally vanish into this abyss of Destruction, into this all-consuming infernal fire.

In both Brahmism and Buddhism, negation, diversity, unconsciousness, passivity and annihilation constitute origin and final end: and, between these extremes of origin and end, the middle state is that of becoming or transmutation and transmigration — which is Mâyâ, the Illusion of existence: Brahma's all-evolving day, waking, and play, succeeded by his all-dissolving night, sleep, and rest (*Laws of Manu*, ch. 1, § 57): *Thus that immutable Power, by waking and reposing alternately, revivifies and destroys this whole assemblage of locomotive and immovable creatures.* The *Rig-Veda* (b. x. ch. 11) presents the source as a Dark Water Chaos:

Nothing was then, that is; nor even that which is not. There was then no atmosphere; nor sky beyond it. What was it that hid all? What was the veiling cover of everything? Was it the water's deep abyss? Death was not then; nor immortality. There was no distinction of day or night. Only Something breathed, without breath, inwardly turned towards itself. Other than it, there was nothing. Darkness there was; in deep darkness enveloped was the Universe — an Ocean without light. Then, first, from the Nothingness enveloped in empty gloom, Desire arose, which was the first germ of mind. This loving impulse the Sages, seeking in their heart, recognized as the bond between Non-Being and Being. (Trans. of Karl Blind.)

III. The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* posits — as source of all things, as parent of all the great gods — Mother Nu, primordial boundless water, the great place, the Dark Abyss. Damaskios says the Egyptians sang praises to the first principle, as a darkness beyond all intellectual conception, a thrice unknown darkness.

IV. The early philosophy of Nihilism is indicated in the anti-biblical ontology of the primitive Babylonians found in the Cuthah creation-tablet, where *Tihāmat*, the Deep or Watery Abyss as principle of chaos and anarchy, is the origin or producing-mother of all. This is perpetuated in the destructive side of the Shemitic consciousness, first, by the Assyrians, and at a later period in the written Kabbala of the Jews.

V. According to the Kabbala, the first principle is the hidden, formless, Nothing, whence all things are drawn: not nothing in the ordinary sense — because all kabbalists hold the philosophic dogma, *ex nihilo nihil fit* — but *Enkadmon*, the primordial nothing, nothing conceived as the cause of causes, as primordial Non-being. This first principle is conceived to be a confused totality, an obscure chaos, without form and without name; the mysterious unknown that precedes all things, even the divine attributes; the Unknown of unknowns, the Ancient of ancients. This principle is spoken of as the Unmanifested God; and is sometimes called *En*, "the Nothing"; sometimes *makom*, "the place": the *Zohar* says, before creation, *God was alone, without form and resembling nothing. . . . Before God had manifested himself, when all things were yet hidden in him, he was the least known among all unknown things. In this state he has no other name than that which expresses interrogation. He began by forming an imperceptible point; this was his own thought; then he began to construct with his thought a mysterious holy form;*

and, finally, he covered it with a rich and shining garment —we mean the World.

VI. The Hesiodic Chaos of the Æolians corresponds closely with the Dark Water Chaos of the *Rig-Veda*, with the primordial water (Mother Nu) of the Egyptian cosmogony, and with the Chaotic Deep of the Babylonian creation-tablet.

VII. Leukippos and Demokritos posited the boundless Vacuum and atoms, as the principles of the universe and the only real cause and existence: they conceived that worlds are produced and destroyed through the integration and disintegration caused by Motion, which is the necessary force of invisible atoms.

Epikouros and Lucretius but develop these same principles; which are also at the basis of the materialistic Nihilism of our time, of which the so-called "Evolution" doctrine is the most prominent — which is, in truth, the philosophy of Dissolution.

VIII. The eternal principle of Stoicism is a boundless ethereal vacuum, in which the elemental world becomes alternately evolved and dissolved, or produced and destroyed; an indefinite abyss of nature, conceived as an eternal necessity and an unlimited vacuity, in which active and passive principles eternally subsist together and sustain each other: the one, a universal principle of fire, conceived as ethereal essence and as active and formative Force, which is called *Spirit, God, Fate;* a being of a certain quality which is the motive power of matter and the universal cause of production and destruction; a spirit full of intelligence of a fiery nature, having no proper form, but transforming itself into whatsoever it pleaseth: and the other, being a universal principle of water, conceived as material essence and as passive and formless Capacity; which is called primary matter — being without

quality, but a universal receptivity of quality and the manifesting medium of the ethereal fire — the universal substance which the fire has for its peculiar manifestation; admitting expansion and contraction, but neither increase nor decrease. These two, Absolute Force and Absolute Capacity (or Fate and Matter) are the principles of the universe; they have, in themselves, neither bodies nor forms, are without generation or beginning, and will have no end: they are the eternal, ingenerate, incorruptible, and invisible universe, which alternately produces and destroys this temporal, generate, corruptible, and visible universe of the four elements, which is the fulness of bodies, of forms, and of qualities; the body of divinity. The ethereal or divine fire is conceived as seminal principle and formative cause; as the mind or Reason of the world, called Fate, which is diffused as seed through matter; and which, having converted all matter into moisture, left in the moisture causative seeds or seminal reasons for the generation of the four elements and the elementary world, as a bounded, limited plenum, produced in the midst of the boundless, unlimited vacuum; as the temporal and destructible body of divinity: it is conceived that the world is seated in a boundless, unlimited, material vacuity, which is beyond it, and circumfused about it, and into which it will be dissolved by conflagration — to be again evolved by the active, fiery force of the Abyss.

IX. The secret theosophic doctrines of the mystical sects of the Essenes, who arose about 200 years B.C., and of the Theraputæ of Egypt, were perhaps identical with those of the Kabbala. It is known that they had ancient sacred writings, distinct from the Old Testament, which were preserved with great secrecy; that their observances were contrary to the maxims of the Bible; and that candidates for initiation swore not to reveal their doctrines.

We find in Philo Judaeus of Alexandria, whose affiliation with the Theraputæ is quite probable, distinct marks of kabbalistic doctrine, in his conception of God—to whom every quality is denied, and only the attribute of indeterminateness is conceded; who is called the place of ideas, the place of the universe; and who in himself (without the world, which he calls God's garment) is death and solitude.

X. The Nihilistic philosophy early found entrance into the Christian Church; and the clearest and most complete posit of the Abyssal Nothing as first principle was made by the various sects of Syrian Gnosticism, which extensively corrupted Christian doctrine by the attempt to unite Kabbalistic Nihilism with the ideas of Christian theology. We see, for example, that the *Bythos* of the Ophites and Sethians must be derived from kabbalistic tradition; as well as the doctrine of Basilides, who posited, at the head of the world of emanation, Non-entity, as the ineffable, unrevealed God, who is above all name and representation, the Non-existent one. The same position belongs to Valentinus, who, in opposition to the Personal God of Christianism, posited, as God, the incognizable Bythos, the Abyss, the Depth; posited the Absolute Void as the obscure and unknowable basis of existence, as the superessential Origin of Being.

XI. It was within the fold of the Church at Alexandria that the most subtle and confusive form of Nihilistic philosophy was introduced into Christian doctrine by means of the powerful speculations of Clement of Alexandria and of his pupil Origen. This claimed to be the true gnosis, but the real significance of it was to invert the orthodox doctrine of the Church. The doctrine of Clement has intimate relations with Philo and with the Kabbala: and, in the more explicit statements of Origen, whose original

mind developed its principles into their consequences and formulæ, this heretical system produced the doctrinal disintegration of the Eastern Church, and formulated subtle falsities which became the historical heresies of Christendom, and were so extensively received by the Eastern Church in the third century, that it would have been dangerous to the existence of the church to œcumenically condemn them, until they clearly exhibited their Anti-Christian character in the Arian and Semi-Arian heresies. Though Clement presents the Nihility of Original Cause in an eclectical, intellectual form, and with a perverted Theism, yet he exhibits the invariable features of nihilistic doctrine, and not the Personal God of Christianity. He (*Strom.*, 4, V, chs. XII, XIII) calls the First Principle, *the Depth, containing and embosoming all things, inaccessible and boundless; the Unknown; without form and name; for everything which falls under a name is originated; we knowing not what he is, but what he is not.*

Origen, equally with Clement, ignores the Christian doctrine of the revelation, vision, and knowledge of God: that *the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* He states that God is incomprehensible and self-unconscious, *exceeds the comprehension not only of temporal but even of eternal intelligence* (*De Prin.*, IV. I. 28). The Agnosticism of Origen, however, though including nihilistic elements, does not reach the plane of Nihilism: his ontology distinctly places him in the ranks of Etherealism or Immaterialism. With regard to the attributes of God, he insists that He *is altogether incorporeal* (IV. I. 27), *immaterial* (I. VI. 4).

His God seems to be an incorporeal intellectual fire and light (like the Stoics'), of which *every rational creature,*

without any distinction, receives a share (II. VII. 2); the works of Divine Providence and the plan of the world are rays of the Divine nature (I. I. 6).

XII. The Nihilistic Ontology renewed its deadly existence in the so-called Neo-Platonism of Alexandria, as presented in the Plotinian system, in which was produced that scholastic form of Nihilism and Agnosticism which has furnished the intellectual norm to all succeeding systems.

Plotinos conceives the first principle, God, to be above all attributes, which are repugnant to its nature; above good, which he conceives to comprehend all attributes — above and repugnant to intelligence, being, and form, life, soul, and nature: and this supreme principle he conceives to be absolute indefinity and negation, absolute force and passivity, absolute formlessness and indeterminateness, absolute non-being and unconsciousness — unconscious even of itself — to be the Absolute Nothing: to be the negation of good, of intelligence, being, life, activity, soul, nature, and of all number and determinateness; to be the Unknown and the Unknowing. This indefinite, negative, unconscious, formless, chaotic, passive, lifeless force, he calls the simple, the one, the principle, God — containing all and contained by nothing; and he conceives this decausative indefinity and negativeness to be the cause of causes, this deficientive formlessness to produce perfect form, this dissolutive non-being to be the ground of absolute essence, this lifeless, passive force to be the cause of absolute life and activity, this obscure unconsciousness to be the source of absolute light, intelligence, thought; though he states as repugnant to the nature of God (the first principle) intelligence and thought, consciousness and knowledge, life and beauty, activity and liberty, will and providence. The first principle of Plotinos is the ablation of these perfect attributes, not of their imperfect opposites:

he does not say that unconsciousness, non-being, necessity, passivity, death, deformity, and evil are repugnant to the nature of God, but mentions, as so repugnant, only their perfect opposites — his real conception being, that the first, the one, is a confused mingling of these opposites in Possibility or Capacity, or in an indeterminate, indefinite, and unconscious material force, which is at the same time an indifference to and a possibility of opposite manifestations.

That the first principle of Plotinos is Matter conceived as indefinite force and possibility, becomes evident when he comes to state his most simple and abstract conception of matter, which he defines in the same terms as he does the first principle. He says, Matter, considered in itself, is nothing else than the infinite and the indeterminate (*En.*, II. IV. 3), is absolutely without, and exclusive of, quantity, form, and quality; and is absolute negation, privation, and non-being (*En.*, III. VI. 8, 9, 10). This definition describes the indefinite, negative, chaotic force, which he has before called the simple, the one, the principle, God — which, as indeterminate matter, is absolute privation, in fact, consists in the absolute want of all quality, and of all form; and which is, at the same time, a simple possibility of opposite qualities and in general of all possible qualities, as well as a universal capacity for, and at the same time an absolute indifference to, all possible forms. He says, that the privative and the indeterminate are the very essence of matter; and that matter, as the absolute defect of every quality, is the very principle of imperfection; as the absolute indifference for any form, is evil itself (*En.*, II. IV. 16); and as pure formless possibility is absolute non-being (*En.*, III. VI. 6); is the simple-possible, the pure non-entity.

Plotinos does not otherwise state the origin of the first or indeterminate matter, because it is necessarily without

origin: but he states the origin of two spheres of determinate matter, which are intelligible matter, and sensible matter: he says, that Intelligence — the first emanation from the one — in developing itself produces intelligible matter, the principle of the infinite multitude of ideas; and that Soul, the second emanation, by the expansion of its powers engenders sensible matter, the basis of its operations. He thus conceives material possibility to be included or involved in Intelligence; and we may thence conclude that he conceives absolute possibility, as indeterminate matter, to be involved (or included) in the One, from which Intelligence is the first emanation. If it were denied that Plotinos identified the One and Matter, Energy and Capacity, it would then be necessary to state his conception as follows: Confusedly mingled with Spirit — which is the One, the absolute unconscious Energy or force, the universal principle and cause of good, of intelligence, being, form, life, beauty, *etc.* — is matter, which is otherness, the absolute passive Capacity, the universal privation of quality and form, and at the same time, the universal possibility of all qualities, as well as the universal receptivity of all possible forms; the first emanation from which Confusion of Spirit-Matter is Intelligence or Being, as the representative of Spirit, and intelligible matter, as the representative of matter and the shadow of intelligence: but this conception, which is almost identical with that of Stoicism, would posit distinction in the first principle, and this is contrary to the ideal of Plotinos, and therefore cannot be allowed, even if it is implied in his statement. We must therefore conceive his first principle to be the identity of matter and spirit, of capacity and energy, in the one passive omnipossible force.[1]

[1] The Plotinian conception of the so-called unity, which is in reality an indistinct and indefinite chaos of material possibility, is the type-

The Nihilistic Philosophy, which had exerted its malign influence upon the Christian Church in a partial form in the rationalism of Clement and Origen of Alexandria, appeared in a total and radical form in the mysticism of the pseudo-Dionysios and of his master, the pseudo-Hierotheos. This false mysticism of the fifth century pervaded the idealism of the Eastern Church, and furnished ontologic principles to the Scholastic Philosophy, and afterwards to German Mysticism.

XIII. The Dionysian philosophy[1] posits the Supreme Neither or Negation as the Source of all things, even of God, who is said to be only the deific power which emanates to us from, the incognible and ablative Supreme (the Nothing); which is the first principle, *the Cause of all*, called *Thearkia* (origin of Divinity); is absolute Incognibility and Unconsciousness; is the negation of everything that can be named: *It is not one or unity or divinity or goodness or spirit; neither is it filiation or paternity; nor anything else of those things which are known to us or which are; it is not any of the things which are not or which are; the things which are do not know it as it is, nor does it know the things which are, as they are; neither is it darkness nor light, neither falsehood nor truth; nor is there at all any positio or ablatio of it (Divine Names)*. In *Divine Names*, he states that all things, including contraries, exist in the first cause, *The Cause of all things . . . the Unknown.* From this unknown cause of all things are the intellectual and intelligent essences of deiform angels and souls, and the

form of all conceptions of the first principle of Nihilism and Pessimism. We find it repeated and expanded in the pannihilism of pseudo-Dionysios (V cent.), of John Scotus Eregina (IX cent.), of Eckhart and Tauler (XIV cent.), of Nicholas Cusanus (XV cent.), of Jakob Böhme (XVII cent.), of the German Speculative School (XIX cent.), and of Anglo-American Hegelianism and Evolutionism.

[1] *Mystic Theology*, ch. V.

natures of the whole world, and all things. All appellations of the Unknown, such as God, life, substance, light, word, are nothing but deific, vivific, *etc.*, powers which emanate from the Unknown to us. He says that this first principle can be described only by negations, not by affirmations; that negation is before and superior to affirmation; and that the mystic, by the very fact that he knows *nothing*, knows supermentally, and is able *by the negation of vision and cognition to see and to know that which is above vision and cognition by the very fact that he does not see or know:* thus realizing, through unconsciousness, union with the Supreme Unconscious, the superessential ablation, which is the source and origin from which emanate God and the world, and to which source they both return. This Supreme principle is variously stated, as the Divine Darkness which embraces all things in its circuit; the supershining darkness which is the negation of vision and cognition; the inaccessible light which God inhabits; the shining darkness of the silence, above and more than light; Supreme Identity and Incognibility, above God, above mind, above essence, above word and knowledge. The supersubstantial *Thearkia* or origin of divinity from which emanate the forces which we call God, life, word, substance, *etc.*, is the supershining Darkness and mystery-teaching Silence: and, by a corresponding unconsciousness or ablation and darkening of intelligence, the mystic, passing above all divine lights, rises to the superessential ray of the Divine Darkness, enters, and is absorbed into the mystical darkness of unconsciousness or incognition (*agnosia*).

This is the fifth-century Agnosticism and Philosophy of the Unconscious. This nihilistic philosophy pervaded the theological *Summa* of the Eastern Church made by John of Damascus, and was introduced into Western Christian-

ity by John Eregina, who translated the Dionysian writings and put forth, in most philosophic form, that system of Pannihilism which constituted the ontological starting-point of the Scholastic philosophy of the Western Church, and was the means of establishing the Dionysian system in Western Theology. John Eregina is a genuine follower of pseudo-Dionysios, though he transformed the mystic Dionysian system into the forms of Western philosophic thought. By this system, Emanation is substituted for Creation, Unconscious Eternal Negation for the Almighty Eternal God, Absorption for Salvation. That Eregina's system is Pannihilism may be clearly seen, because he states the Nothing and Non-being to be the origin of all things which exist: and this Nothing he calls God; though, he says, it is not properly God, because above all name and distinction, even that of divinity, even that of essence or being: *Essentia ergo dicitur Deus, sed proprie essentia non est, cui opponitur nihil; ὑπερούσιος igitur est, id est, superessentialis. . . . Deus dicitur, non proprie Deus est* (*Divis. Nat.*, I. 16). He objects to call this Origin, Nothing; and prefers to call it *absentia totius essentiae* [*abs-esse*], rather than the privation of all essence and substance (*Ibid.*, III. 5). The identification of the Nothing, the *abs-esse*, with the divine nature, we find fully stated in *Lib.* III. 19.

XIV. It is the German mystics of the XIV century — the Dominicans Eckhart, Tauler, and Suso — who reproduce this Nihilistic mysticism, not only as an eclectical ideal conception of ontologic principles and theologic dogmas; but also as a psychologic experience of the individual consciousness. Thus, although there is less originality of vision, there is greater intensity of experience.

In Master Eckhart (†1329), the First Principle is the Divine Darkness and Unconsciousness of pseudo-Dionysios:

the source from which all things proceed and to which they all return: he says that *Divinity* is the eternal and hidden darkness where God is unknown to Himself; is the simple and motionless Ground of divine being; is divinity before God the Trinity. *Verily, God himself rests not there where he is the first beginning; he rests there where he is an end and a rest of all being . . . what is this ultimate end? It is the hidden darkness of the eternal Godhead, and is unknown, and will never be known. God there remains unknown to himself; and the light of the Eternal Father, this has eternally shone in there, and the darkness comprehendeth not the light* (Eckhart's *Sermons*). *God*, on the contrary, is divinity coming forth from itself, acting *ab extra*, manifesting itself and recognizing itself: this thought is the word, in which the divinity, in pronouncing itself as God, engenders itself; and, when God pronounces himself in the word, He pronounces and engenders the universe of things: by this manifestation alone divinity becomes God — the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Eckhart fully recognizes the return of God and all things into the original unmanifested divinity or unconscious abyss: and, with the same boldness as pseudo-Hierotheos, the father of the Dionysian mysticism, recognizes that, in the return of all things into the divinity-source, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are done away with or pass away, and all returns to the rest of the divinity before it became God. God came forth from the hidden darkness of his divinity only to return to it. The Father engenders the Son by coming forth from Himself, and engenders the Holy Ghost by returning into Himself. That the thought of Eckhart is strictly Pannihilistic, and that, in this pseudo-divine trinitarian process, he has in mind only the temporary Creation, is seen by his phrase: *Before the Creation God was not God:* being only the unmani-

fested divinity — that perfect Non-Being of which God, the triune Creation, was the defective and temporary manifestation which it is desirable to be rid of. Eckhart says: *I pray God to make me quit of Himself* (*i.e.*, as God the Trinity), *for the Being without Being, the Absolute, is above all personal distinction:* it being only by passing beyond the Trinity that the soul can become identical with the divinity: as Eckhart conceived that he himself was.

Tauler (1290–1361), following the same principle, and using almost the language of pseudo-Dionysios, states God as universal negation, the Abyssal Nothing and Superluminous Darkness, saying: *God is that of which we must deny all; he is the true increate nothing* (Tauler, *Serm.*, fol. 142, B 103 B). *This nameless being is, in his divinity, a bottomless abyss, an impenetrable darkness, superior to all light. This silent and hidden divinity comes forth from its solitude and manifests itself in the Trinity: it is then that it becomes God.*

The Nihilism of Suso (1300–1365) is as complete as that of his predecessors, though he denies the final annihilation of individual distinctions, in the Dissolutive Nothing, so boldly asserted by them — even in divinity. This inconsistency is to be attributed to the fact that the standpoint of his consciousness was psychological, and therefore defective in ontologic insight. He says: *Man is not absolutely annihilated in the Eternal Nothing, there remains to him an idea of his distinction:* but Suso's recognition of the Eternal Nothing as divinity, origin, and indefinite essence is as complete as that of Eckhart and Tauler; and he expressly says: *St. Dionysios hath rightly said that God is Non-being.*

Card. Nicolaus Cusanus (1401–1464), Bishop of Brixen, one of the most eminent men of the XV century, continued the Nihilistic tradition from pseudo-Dionysios, John Eregina, and Master Eckhart in the form of the Identity

Philosophy. He posits, as God, *Identitas Absoluta;* which is a combination of *The One* of Plotinos and *The Nothing* of the Kabbala. He conceives Absolute Identity to be, primarily, eternal capacity; the possibility of everything; to be infinite in the negative sense; the absolutely small and the absolutely great, *etc.* The World he conceives to be becoming-being and limited possibility realized through contraction, and shut in and moving between the maximum and the minimum of the absolute: thus realizing a perverted (idea of) Trinity. Here, in place of Creation, we have the Kabbalistic idea of contraction in the indefinite matter (called God), as the law under which was produced this World — with its genera, species, and individuals — as the middle in this pseudo-Trinity of beginning, middle, and end.

XV. But it is Jakob Böhme who, with the intensity of false inspiration, presents us with the most ample and therefore diffuse and chaotic vision of the Nothing as Infernal Abyss: for he is not only a nihilist, but a pessimist of the extremest kind. In him we find the psychologic period of human consciousness developing its most false-supernatural mind inspired by the falsehood, evil, and deformity of the Satanic Word. He was a veritable medium, incapable of the usual literary and intellectual processes, possessed by the vision of things diabolic, a veritable seer of the devil, of non-being, of dissolutive causality, and of infernal processes. The First Cause and Source posited by Böhme's Theosophy is the Void Abyss, the Dark Nothing or Vacuum, the Abyssal Nothing; which he also terms *the Original, the Eternal Mother*, and from it he evolves, in successive order, the Devil, God himself, and all Nature, as its threefold manifestation. The First Principle (the Origin of Being) in this Maternal Abyss, is absolute desire, want, or anguish (called the Eternal Will of the

Abyss), conceived as a threefold essence the elements of which are harshness, bitterness, and fire, and as the source of anger or wrath, of hell-fire and the dark-world wherein the devils dwell. This threefold essential diabolic principle (which he blasphemously calls God the Father himself) he also terms the First Being; the Essence of all essences; the Being of all beings; the Principle out of which the world was generated and created in the beginning; the Not-god (the Father), out of which are generated God (the Son) the light-world, and Nature, the mixt, temporal world.

We find the Mystic Nihilism of Böhme transmitted in regular succession and ever-increasing extension, though in partial form, in both Catholicism and Protestantism, by Poiret, Swedenborg, Oetinger, Novalis, Saint Martin, Oken, Von Baäder, Molitor, Martensen, F. Delitzsch, and many others. It also furnished a powerfully suggestive mine of thought to the philosophers of the German Transcendental School of our century. Schelling transforms Böhme's vision into intellectual science, in which the Abyssal Nothing and Chaotic Darkness is presented as the Absolute Identity and Indifference of opposites — of God and the Not-god — as the absolute unconscious ground of God and Nature, the common root and seed of the Deity and the World.

The Nihilistic Ideal is continued by Hegel, who transcendentalizes the pancosmism of Aristotle, as Schelling transcendentalizes the pannihilism of Neoplatonism. Hegel states logical nihilism and settles the great problems of Being by grammatical quibbles. He says: *The Infinite is the Nothing of the Finite*, the negation of a negation; he conceives the Becoming, the concrete universe, to be the only reality — pure Being and Non-being being equally Nothing; and, as he conceives the Becoming to be but the

movement or transition from Being to Naught, and *vice versa* (the immediate disappearance of one in the other), the most complete logical nihilism is the result. Hegel says, *Being is the indefinite Immediate; . . . Being, the indefinite Immediate, is, in fact, Nothing, and neither more nor less than Nothing. . . . Pure Being is pure indefiniteness and vacuity. . . . Pure Nothing is simple equality with itself, perfect vacancy, determinationlessness, and intentlessness, [formlessness and matterlessness]; indistinguishedness in itself. . . . Nothing is . . . in general the same as what pure Being is. Pure Being and Pure Nothing are therefore the same. Both Being and the negation of Being [Non-Being] are enunciated in one, Nothing, as it is in the Becoming. . . . Becoming implies that Nothing does not remain Nothing, but passes over into the other, into Being* [and Being into Nothing]. He conceives truth and reality to be in the Becoming, which is the transition or middle state between Being and Nothing, their inseparableness and difference: the continuous transition of Naught into Being and Being into Naught. He says, *The whole veritable result which has here yielded itself is Becoming.*

The Unconscious Destructive Force of the Nothing is specifically presented as sole Being in the Pessimistic Nihilism of Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, which is founded on Böhmistic and Buddhistic Nihilism.

These German systems, though using different terms, and emphasizing some one element and some another, all present as first cause and universal essence the same principle, and this principle is the Dissolutive Nothing: they all work at the same problem: to evolve God and the World out of the Infernal Nothing: positing the indefinite, unconscious, infernal ghost, evolving to God, the world, and consciousness; and again dissolving to dissolutive negativeness and unconsciousness: the eternal becom-

ing of universal non-being in an endless chain of individual existence and individual annihilation.

The statement of Scientific Nihilism is made by Herbert Spencer, who, though claiming to avoid both Nihilism and Materialism by declaring the Absolute to be Unknown Persistence, and by stating that *Matter, Motion, and Force are but symbols of the Unknown Reality*, yet asserts this unknown reality and cause to be Persistent Force, of which these symbols are effects, and which evolves Death and Dissolution as its necessary manifestation; and who identifies the apparent and the relative with the real and the absolute, a fundamental dogma of his philosophy being, *that the relative reality, being thus continually persistent in us, is as real to us, as would be the absolute reality could it be immediately known.* This philosophy follows in the same line of ideas as the foregoing German systems, and establishes on a lower plane of thought the same analogies; and, though presenting itself as the Philosophy of Appearance, it recognizes an indefinite consciousness of the absolute and unconditioned to be the universal and indestructible basis of all thought, and founds itself upon an hypothesis — *the persistence of force* — declared to be a datum of consciousness; claiming to deduce thence all its conclusions, *a priori;* and confessing that *the truth as arrived at deductively cannot be inductively confirmed.* It requires the recognition of the imperceptible, the indefinite and the chaotic — of absolute formlessness — as original cause and ultimate end; and conceives that the material universe will evolve into an equilibration of opposite forces, which will be an omnipresent death: to be followed by its dissolution into the abyss of annihilative force.

This is the reproduction in the forms of modern thought of the Hindu Mâyâ, the Illusion of Existence (Brahma's all-evolving day, waking, and play — succeeded by his all-

dissolving night, sleep, and rest); and the mission of this philosophy is to transcendentalize the materialism of Demokritos, Epikouros, and Lucretius.

Herbert Spencer, who, in order to legitimate his thought, is, contrary to his own principle of the evolution of consciousness, *obliged to reject a large part of human thinking as not thinking at all, but merely pseudo-thinking*, and asserts that *men have supposed themselves to think what they did not think.* Spencer's "Philosophy," though it professes to be nothing but the unification of atomistic physical science, or the entire natural history of things, including *their appearance out of the imperceptible and their disappearance into the imperceptible*, yet posits an imperceptible and indefinite Persistent Force, as unknown cause, absolute reality and being, and the omnipresent basis of all known and relative existence, which constitutes its effect. It conceives that all things of the universe are *experiences of force;* are *results of universally-co-existent forces of attraction and repulsion; . . . which are the opposite forms of force, . . . are the complementary aspects of that absolutely persistent force which is the ultimate datum of consciousness;* and that these opposite forces preside over the re-distribution of matter and motion — which are simply modes of these forces — in opposite processes of Evolution and Dissolution: of Evolution, which is the appearance of things out of the imperceptible and their integration as material aggregates until this integrative re-distribution reaches a complete equilibration of these opposite forces, which is Death: followed by Dissolution, which is the disintegration of material aggregates until the disintegrative re-distribution of matter and motion accomplishes the disappearance of things into the imperceptible or indefinite force, being, and cause, out of which they appeared.

In other words, it posits — as absolute cause, being, and reality, as the omnipresent and persistent basis of all change, becoming, and relation, and as the final end of the Becoming — an Indefinite, Unconscious, Material Force, involving as its manifestation and effect the Evolution and Dissolution of definite and conscious material force in the phenomena of the universe; or in the Evolution unto Death and the Dissolution unto Dissipation of the phenomenal world: this force being self-evolving and integrating, self-dissolving and disintegrating, through the action and reaction of its opposite elements.

According to Spencer's statement of *First Principles*, all existence, unconscious and conscious, is the manifestation — in the action and reaction of the antagonistic derivative forces of attraction and repulsion, which are universally co-existent — of a forever undiminished and unincreased quantity of Equilibrate, Persistent Absolute Force: existence arises and progresses, regresses and ceases, simply from the continuous re-distribution of a certain fixed quantity of indestructible motion and matter, which are the manifestations of this omnipresent persistent force, under the opposite material laws of attraction and repulsion; and it consists of the antagonistic processes of growth by the integration of matter, and decay by the disintegration of matter — it consists of the Evolution of existence and the Dissolution of existence: the Evolution of existence — including all structure and function, physical, vital, mental, and social — being the passage, change, or transformation of motion and matter (under the supremacy of the laws of Attraction and Contraction, and by the constantly increasing ratio of matter to motion) from an indefinite, indeterminate, imperceptible, and insensible, into a definite, determinate, perceptible, and sensible state; from a diffused, rare, incoherent, and

confused, into a concentrated, dense, coherent, and orderly state; from a uniform, simple, like, and homogeneous, into a multiform, complex, different, and heterogeneous state; in which, finally, its opposite elements or forces become in perfect equilibrium and rest, which is *Death, or that final equilibration which precedes Dissolution:* and this is followed by the antagonistic process of Dissolution, which *undoes what Evolution has done (is the complement of Evolution)*, and is the disintegration of Matter through the constant increase of Motion: is the passage, change, or transformation of motion and matter, under the supremacy of the laws of Repulsion and Expansion, back again into the homogeneous, like, simple, uniform, confused, incoherent, rare, diffused, insensible, imperceptible, indeterminate, and indefinite state of their origin. Thus, universal Evolution results in universal Death; and is followed by universal Dissolution; conclusions deduced from the original posit of the Persistence of Force.

This ought to be called the philosophy of Dissolution and Destruction, for the reason that its permanent and persisting being, its first cause and final end, is a dissolutive and destructive essence and principle, involving a capacity for temporary evolution and construction or integration: but dissolution and destruction reign supreme in its conception of the source, and of the end of all things — and consistently, because primary chaos must be chaos-ending. It would seem that Nihilism in philosophy could go no further, but in Society we have yet to see the fruits of belief in these principles which are already practically at work, calling for revolution in the social status, from top to bottom: for it is this nihilistic idealism that constitutes the causative principle in that social annihilation conceived and demanded by the Socialistic Nihilism of our time, which aims at the destruction of all forms of Society

— of Philosophy, of the Church, of the State, and of the Family — without any ability to reconstruct the edifice from the ruins it would make.

This extreme demand of avowed nihilists is greatly aided by the party of so-called progress, which unconsciously works progressively toward the same end, and without the aid of which the radical party in philosophy, religion, and government, in literature, art, and life would be unable to attain its ends. It is this element of destructive progress that undermines the fabric of Society; and, unless the constructive element build as well as preserve, it must eventually destroy it.

That so-called Progress is, in reality, Degress — is not constructive, but is destructive by degeneration — may be seen from the facts, that what it produces is change, always change; and that, while antagonistic to what exists, it does not construct something distinctly different from or opposite to it, but changes what exists, reconstructing it in an opposite sense — inverts it; it progresses by developing the destructive side of the human consciousness, and the lower regions of it at the expense of the higher; for the "new" learning of our century is the result of development from below, not of birth "from on high." From this point of view, if we compare the philosophic and theologic results of *Progressive Heterodoxy*, as presented in our *Introduction* (pp. 9–14), with the fundamental ideas of Nihilism, as presented in the foregoing sketch, it will be seen that they have the same foundation, as well as great similarity of presentation, and that the new theology is especially related to the Stoic system.

The solution of the questions of philosophy and theology does not lie in the rehabilitation of pagan materialism,

pantheism or nihilism, or of Christian Heterodoxy — it lies in the new birth of Christian Orthodoxy, and in the rebuilding, on the everlasting truths of Christ, the edifice of Christian philosophy and theology as Rational Christianity, that we may see these truths with the same insight, believe them with the same faith, and love them with the same love, that did the early Christians; but that we may see, believe, and live with a deeper insight into, faith in, and love of, the truths themselves, instead of the symbolism with which they were veiled to the early Christian. This is true progress. A philosophy which does not take, as its corner-stone, Christ Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of the Living God, is not advancing on the road of human progress, in the light of Christianity, but is retrograding to the darkness of Paganism, even if it take the name of Christ in vain, by claiming an inborn equality of nature with Him.

The only hope for Society is in the new birth of Christianity in the consciousness, on its highest plane, as Christian Philosophy; in the light of which the Church, the State, the Family, and the Individual may be reborn, and a Christian Society be constituted in harmonious order from its highest to its lowest elements. Reconstruction must come as a birth from on high, not as an evolution from below. Building from earth to heaven results in a material Babel: it is only as God-Christ boweth the heavens and cometh down to man, and as man walketh in the light of God, that true construction can take place in any order of intelligence, whether of science, of faith, or of philosophy: for, *where there is no vision the people perish.* The despair for the future rests on this blindness of the spiritual eyes, and the conceit of the natural understanding to which the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness: the hope for the future rests on the faith and

knowledge, that Christ hath power to give sight to the blind and life to the dead, and that the time is near at hand for the raising of the veil, and for the new birth in the spiritual powers of man that he may receive the new vision of God, the Trinity of Holy Ghost, Father, and Son, and of His Christ, both eternal and temporal, both universal and individual.

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